



Consumers Health  
Forum OF Australia

SUBMISSION

# AHPRA – Guidelines: Telehealth consultations with patients

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Consumers Health Forum of Australia (2023)  
*AHPRA – Guidelines: Telehealth Consultations  
with Patients* . Canberra, Australia

**P:** 02 6273 5444

**E:** [info@chf.org.au](mailto:info@chf.org.au)

[twitter.com/CHFofAustralia](https://twitter.com/CHFofAustralia)

[facebook.com/CHFofAustralia](https://facebook.com/CHFofAustralia)

**Office Address**

7B/17 Napier Close,  
Deakin ACT 2600

**Postal Address**

PO Box 73  
Deakin West ACT 2600

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# Introduction

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Consumers Health Forum (CHF) is the national peak body representing the interests of Australian healthcare consumers and those with an interest in healthcare consumer affairs. CHF works to achieve safe, quality, timely healthcare for all Australians, supported by accessible health information and systems. At the heart of CHF's policy agenda is consumer-centred care. CHF appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the AHPRA Medical Board on their Draft revised guidelines: Telehealth Consultations with patients.

## Issues

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### *Consultation with consumers*

In appendix B, one entry in the list of consumer organisations consulted is "Health Consumers of Rural and Remote Australia Inc Consumers Health Forum". As HCRRA is listed further down and is not associated with CHF, we believe this is written in error and must be amended. In addition, we are not aware that we have provided any feedback on this issue, and thus believe it is inappropriate to claim to have consulted CHF. There are numerous other consumer peak bodies that share the same concern. HCQ and HCC WA have both expressed to CHF that they are not aware of their having participated in consultation with AHPRA on this matter, despite their inclusion on the list within the draft.

### *Impact on vulnerable people*

On the issue of the retraction of support for asynchronous text-based prescriptions, the draft states that there is not projected to be any impact on vulnerable people and doesn't provide any support for that statement. Some consumer studies have shown that this is not necessarily a view shared by consumers, and particularly by vulnerable consumers. In order to make a statement of this magnitude, on an issue that can strongly impact access to prescription medication, especially in times of a GP crisis, it must be supported by substantial evidence. CHF would welcome evidence of consumer consultation on this.